

DALL SHEEP ANNUAL SURVEY AND INVENTORY FEDERAL AID PERFORMANCE REPORT

STATE: Alaska

GRANT AND SEGMENT NR.: W-27-4

PROJECT NR.: 6.0

WORK LOCATION: Statewide

PROJECT LOCATIONS: Game Management Units 2, 3, and 5

PERIOD: 1 July 2000–30 June 2001

PROJECT TITLE: The Status of Alaska Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations.

REPORT DESCRIPTION: This statewide performance report includes the three regions involved in caribou survey and inventory activities. Statewide and regional activities are listed before specific activities by herd and game management unit.

The Status of Alaska Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region II

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Prepare a sheep management report.

Dall Sheep draft management reports will be completed during spring 2002.

Activity 2: Write an annual survey and inventory performance report.

Activity 3: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

The Board of Game addressed proposals regarding Dall sheep in Region 2 during its spring 2001 meeting.

Activity 4: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Activity 5: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Dall sheep surveys were conducted in portions of all mountain ranges in region 2 during this reporting period.

Activities by Mountain Range and Unit

Kenai Mountains (Unit 7)

Activity 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

The preliminary 2000/01 harvest for the general season was:

Rams 19	Ewes 0	Total 19
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Length of longest horn for rams taken during the general season ranged from 32 to 38 inches and averaged 35.5. The mean base circumference was 13.8 and the age was 8.4 years.

The preliminary 2000/01 harvest for the permit hunts was:

Round Mountain Hunt # 152	Rams 1	Ewes 5	Total 6
Crescent Mountain Hunt # 154	Rams 1	Ewes 1	Total 2
Crescent Mountain Hunt # 156	Rams 0	Ewes 0	Total 0

Activity 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Three count areas were surveyed resulting in the classification of 207 sheep. The composition was 44 rams, 130 ewes and small rams, and 33 lambs. Lamb percentage of the total classified was 16 percent.

South Wrangell Mountains (Unit 11)

Activity 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Preliminary Harvest:

GMU 11	93 Rams	20 ewes
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Activity 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys in cooperation with the National Park Service to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Survey results July 2000:

CA 11	161 ewes	40 rams	38 lambs	Total 239
CA 12	173 ewes	125 rams	31 lambs	Total 329
CA 22	143 ewes	38 rams	16 lambs	Total 202
CA 23	174 ewes	104 rams	29 lambs	Total 316

Chugach Mountains (Units 11, 13D, 14A, and 14C)

Activity 1: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

The preliminary Chugach Mountains 2000–01 harvest was:

Rams 117	Ewes 32	Total 149
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Activity 2: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Survey flown in Unit 14C:

Rams 736	Ewes/yearling rams 1,152	Lambs 230 (11%)	Total 2,118
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Activity 3: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

Board of Game met in March 2001 and discussed 2 sheep hunting proposals specific to Unit 14. Neither passed.

TALKEETNA MOUNTAINS (UNITS 13A AND E, 14A AND B)

Activity 1: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

Provided harvest and survey data to Board of Game at their spring 2000 meeting. One proposed change affecting this herd was discussed but failed.

Activity 2: Monitor the sheep harvest through field observations, hunter harvest reports and contact with hunters.

Talkeetna Mountains ram harvest = 49, well below the objective level of 75.

Activity 3: Conduct summer aerial sex and age composition surveys to determine status, trend, productivity and mortality of sheep.

Surveys conducted in 2000 for 6 count areas tallied 1078 total sheep which is a 39% decline since 1999. This included a 76% decline in lambs and a 34% decline in legal rams. No surveys were conducted in 2001.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project:

None

Segment Period Project Costs:

Fiscal year	Region			Total
	II	III	V	
Actual	19.3			

Explanation: Sheep surveys schedule for the end of FY00 could not be flown until the beginning of FY01 because of weather. Two series of sheep surveys were conducted during FY01 rather than the planned one.

The Status of Alaska Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region III

Regionwide Activities

Activity 1: Write an annual survey and inventory performance report.

We wrote annual performance reports for all areas.

Activity 2: Provide information to the Board of Game during the regulatory process.

No presentations were made to the Board of Game because Region III was not on the regular board schedule.

Activities by Mountain Range or Use Area

Mentasta, Nutzotin and northern Wrangell Mountains

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We monitored harvest and hunter distribution by aerial survey, hunter contacts in the field, and review of harvest reports. Unit-wide, 288 hunters harvested 99 rams during the general hunt.

Activity 2: Conduct an aerial survey to monitor population composition and trend.

We did not conduct aerial surveys because funding was used to complete surveys in the Tok Management Area.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project:

We reviewed management objectives using input from advisory committees, guides, landowners, sportsman groups, and tourists in relation to past survey and harvest data. No changes were necessary to meet biological or public needs.

Tok Management Area

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We continued to administer a low number of drawing permits for the TMA.

We monitored harvest and hunter distribution by aerial survey, in field hunter contacts, and review of harvest reports. Under the TMA drawing permit, 98 hunters (82% participation rate) harvested 33 rams (9% ≥ 40 ”).

Activity 2: Distribute a hunter opinion survey to all permit holders to assess the level of satisfaction with the existing management program, and to identify attitudes toward alternative management schemes.

Completed a hunter opinion survey assessing hunter satisfaction with TMA sheep management and reported the results in the International Sheep Conference Proceedings and in the Foundation of North American Wild Sheep magazine, "The Ram".

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project:

We found 644 sheep during an aerial composition survey in the eastern portion of the TMA, with 11 lambs and 50 rams:100 ewes.

Delta Controlled Use Area

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We monitored harvest by contacting hunters through a mailout questionnaire, personal contacts, and analyzing permit hunt reports.

Activity 2: Conduct aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

No aerial surveys were conducted due to lack of funding.

North Side of the Alaska Range East of the Nenana River, West of the Delta River and South of the Tanana River

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We monitored and analyzed general harvest (RY 2000 = 27 rams) and permit hunt(RY 2000 = 0 permits) data.

Activity 2: Conduct aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

We conducted aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity (2001 = 31 lambs:100 ewes) and lamb survival (2001 survival rate = 0.57).

White Mountains

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We monitored harvest through hunter reports. Reported sheep harvest was 5 rams.

Activity 2: Conduct aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

The 2000 sheep survey for the White mountains was a cooperative effort between BLM, USFWS, and ADF&G. The total count included 381 ewe like, 41 lambs, 145 rams, and 1 unknown.

Tanana Hills

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We administered the Mt. Harper drawing permit hunt.

We monitored harvest and hunter distribution using aerial surveys, in field hunter contacts, and harvest reports/drawing permits. Thirty hunters harvested 5 rams during the general hunt and 3 hunters took 2 rams under the Mt. Harper drawing permit.

Activity 2: Conduct aerial surveys to estimate initial productivity and lamb survival.

We compositioned 100 sheep during an aerial survey in the Glacier Mt. area, finding 10 lambs and 54 rams:100 ewes.

In conjunction with Bureau of Land Management, we compositioned 69 sheep during an aerial survey in the Mt. Harper area, finding 36 lambs and 104 rams:100 ewes.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project:

We reviewed the primary management goal of providing an opportunity to hunt sheep under aesthetically pleasing conditions and the objective in relation to hunter use and ram harvest and found no biological or social evidence for change.

Central Brooks Range West of the Dalton Highway Corridor to Howard Pass, including Gates of the Arctic National Park.

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We monitored a harvest of 21 sheep through statewide harvest reporting system, a harvest of 12 sheep were reported to the GAAR National Park, and 5 sheep were reported through the subsistence mail-out survey.

Eastern Brooks Range

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports.

We gathered and analyzed harvest data, and discussed hunting conditions with hunters.

Alaska Range West and South of Denali National Park

Activity 1: Monitor the harvest through hunter contacts and harvest or permit reports. We monitored harvest through hunter reports. Eighty sheep were reported taken.

Segment Period Costs:

<i>Expenditure</i>	Personnel months	Personnel costs	Operating costs	<i>Total</i>
<i>Planned</i>	9.0	51.7	12.8	64.5
<i>Actual</i>	1.2	8.1	4.8	12.9
<i>Difference</i>	7.8	43.6	8.0	51.6

Explanation:

Actual personnel and operating costs were less than planned because surveys were not conducted in the Western Alaska Range and in the Eastern Brooks Range.

Submitted by:

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Management Coordinator

The Status of Alaska Dall Sheep and Factors Influencing Their Populations in Region V

Regionwide Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Prepare a draft or finalize a sheep management report

Sheep management report will be prepared in March 2002 and submitted in April 2002

ACTIVITY 2: Write an annual survey and inventory performance report.

Performance report for Units and 23 and 26A were prepared August 2001 and submitted to HQ early September 2001

ACTIVITY 3: Provide information to the Board of Game on sheep management.

None.

Mountain Range or Use Area Activities

Baird and DeLong Mountains

ACTIVITY 1: Conduct aerial sex and age composition surveys in established count areas.

The department did not participate in Baird Mountain sheep surveys conducted by the National Park Service. The department did not conduct sheep surveys in the DeLong Mountains because of poor weather, lack of an observer for the department airplane and unavailability of charter aircraft.

ACTIVITY 2: Monitor harvests through the harvest ticket system, permit hunts, community-based harvest assessments, public contacts and field observations.

No sheep hunting was allowed during the reporting period in the Baird and DeLong Mountains. No sheep were reported taken from the Schwatka Mountains.

ACTIVITY 3: Develop updated population objectives in cooperation with the public and other agencies.

POPULATION OBJECTIVES WERE NOT DISCUSSED DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD.

Other activities funded by Federal Aid on this project:

None.

Statewide Segment Period Project Costs:

Fiscal year 2000–2001	Region			Statewide Total
	II	III	V	
Actual	19.3	12.9	2.5	34.7

Statewide Total: \$34,700